

A-Level Languages: French

EXAM BOARD: AQA

What does the course cover?

As you follow the French course, you build on the linguistic knowledge acquired at GCSE, developing your knowledge and understanding of grammar. However, you do so by studying the culture of French speaking countries, specifically

- Social issues and trends (the changing nature of family; the 'cyber-society'; the place of voluntary work; positive features of a diverse society; life for the marginalised; how criminals are treated)
- Political and artistic culture in the French-speaking world (a culture proud of its heritage; contemporary francophone music; cinema - the 7th art form; teenagers - the right to vote and political commitment; demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power? ; politics and immigration)
- Literary texts and films

The course includes an individual research project.

What skills will the course help you develop?

The course fosters a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity, all of which are valuable to you as an individual and to society.

You will become a strong, independent user of French who can interact with native speakers in everyday situations. You will also gain a developed understanding of French-speaking culture and how it has changed over the years.

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed through exams only. At the end of the course there are exams to assess all language skills and your knowledge of the topics studied.

- Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing (2 hours 30 minutes, 40% of the A-Level) has questions around the topics studied, including translation to and from French. In the listening section, students have individual control of the recording.
- Paper 2: Writing (2 hours, 30% of the A-Level) demands two essays in French of around 300 words. There is a choice of questions on the texts/film studied.
- Paper 3: Speaking (21–23 minutes, including 5 minutes preparation time, 30% of the A-Level) with firstly a discussion of one of the themes studied; the discussion is based on a stimulus card which you study in the preparation time. Secondly, presentation and discussion of your individual research project.

What are the entry requirements?

Students wishing to study French should have 5 GCSEs A*-C, including at least a Grade B in French so that you have a sound language base on which to build. Students need to enjoy the discussion and presentation of ideas and expect to write essays.

What do students who study this course go on to do?

Languages open doors to a whole spectrum of careers and employment possibilities; businesses in a wide variety of sectors actively seek recruits with language ability.

Students who take A-Level French go on to study a wide range of subjects at university, partly because languages are a facilitating subject that give you access to lots of courses. Additionally, many universities offer degrees with modules in a Modern Language and can include placements abroad. Some students take a pure modern languages degree, possibly in a non-European language; learning one language develops the skills that you can use to go on to learn other languages.

Who is the staff contact for French?

Mrs Gregory and Miss Mayes